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Your First 'Steps'

In Walking With God

'. . . Nurture faith, shape character, and walk boldly with Christ. . .'

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Dedication

To every new Believer taking their first steps of faith—
may this book be your companion, your encouragement,
and your gentle reminder that you do not walk alone.

And to my family, who have stood by me in love and prayer,
thank you for showing me the beauty of steadfast faith in action.

Publisher's Note

'A Personal Welcome to the Journey'

Dear Reader,

This book is more than pages and ink—it is an invitation. You are beginning the most important journey of your life: walking with God. Whether you are taking your very first steps in faith or looking to renew your commitment, these chapters are designed to guide, encourage, and strengthen you.

Our prayer at Pilgrim Outreach Ministries International Press is that you will discover not just what it means to believe in God, but how to live in the light of His presence each day. Faith is not a sprint but a walk—steady, intentional, and full of grace. Every step counts, and every step draws you closer to the One who loves you most.

So take a deep breath, open your heart, and begin. You are not alone in this journey—millions have walked before you, and God Himself walks beside you.

Welcome to your first steps in walking with God.

Foreword

'Setting the Pace for a New Journey with God'

by Dr. Rebecca Collins, Church Leader

There are moments in life when we know—deep down—that something must change. We may not have the words for it, but we feel the stirring: "There has to be more than this." If you are holding this book, I believe you are in one of those moments. And I also believe this: you did not arrive here by accident.

This book is not a formula, nor is it a list of religious steps to perform. It is a pathway—clear, steady, and Spirit-led—designed to guide you into a relationship with God that is real, vibrant, and alive. Every page is crafted to help you take your next step with confidence, not confusion; with purpose, not pressure; with faith, not fear.

Many Believers start their walk with God full of excitement… only to lose momentum because no one ever showed them how to walk. This book does. It slows the pace just enough to help you breathe, reflect, absorb, and grow—while still nudging you forward into deeper waters with Christ. It will guide you, steady you, and lift you as you begin to walk in the strength God has already prepared for you.

If you read this book slowly, prayerfully, and openly, you will find yourself doing more than learning truth—you will begin living it. And you will sense, perhaps for the first time, that God is closer than you thought… and His plan for you is greater than you imagined.

So take a deep breath.

You're not starting a ritual—you're starting a relationship.

You're not entering a classroom—you're stepping into a journey.

And you're not walking alone—God walks with you, every step.

This book will get you on the right path and help you stay at the right pace.

You are beginning something beautiful.

—Dr. Rebecca Collins

Acknowledgements

'Grateful for the Hands and Hearts Behind This Work'

by James Langston, husband, father, grandfather, senior pastor,
Missionary, and retired Navy veteran

No book is written alone, and this one is no exception. I am deeply grateful to those who encouraged me, prayed for me, and walked with me as these pages came to life.

But before I thank others, I must thank God for saving me. I was only fourteen years old when I read a simple gospel tract. At the back was a prayer of salvation, and though I had read similar words before, these struck something deep in my soul. I prayed them sincerely, meaning every word, and in that moment I was "Born Again."

The fire of God's Spirit came alive in me. People laughed, joked, and even made fun of my decision, but I never looked back and I have never regretted that day. That was fifty-three years ago—and the same excitement and fire that burned in me then burns even brighter now.

To my wife, Cecilia—thank you for your unwavering love, patience, and wisdom. You have been my constant encourager, reminding me daily of God's faithfulness. To my children and grandchildren, who challenge me to live out the truths I write—your laughter, questions, and love keep me grounded in what truly matters.

To the faithful members of Pilgrim Outreach Ministries, who continually labor in love for the gospel and whose testimonies inspire me—your lives are living proof of God's power. Thank you for modeling what it means to walk with Christ daily.

To the many pastors, mentors, and friends who poured into me over the years—your teaching and example have shaped my understanding of discipleship. This book carries your fingerprints. And most of all, to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. All that I am and all that I write belongs to You. May this book bring glory to Your name and help many find their footing as they walk with You.

Personal Note to the Reader:

If you are just beginning this journey, know this—you are not alone. I was once where you are now, and I promise you: walking with Jesus is the greatest decision you will ever make.

—James Langston

Introduction

'Welcome to a Life Bigger Than You Ever Imagined'

by Pastor Jonathan Reyes, The Living Word Center

When you surrendered your life to Christ, you stepped into something far greater than a moment—you entered a new world. A world shaped by God's love, guided by His Spirit, and strengthened by His promises. Salvation is not the finish line; it is the doorway. What lies beyond that doorway is a life full of depth, wonder, transformation, and unimaginable grace.

This book is your invitation to explore that life—its height, its depth, its length, and its width. You are about to discover a God who is more personal than you realized, more patient than you believed, and more powerful than you've yet experienced.

Walking with God isn't complicated, but it is intentional. It requires learning to hear His voice, trusting His leading, and shaping your days around His presence. This introduction marks the beginning of that shift—a movement from surviving to thriving, from wandering to walking, from knowing about God to actually knowing Him.

You will learn what it means to build a life anchored in truth…

to develop habits that strengthen your faith…

to rise after failure…

and to embrace the joy of being fully forgiven, fully loved, and fully known.

This journey is not about perfection—it is about direction. Every step matters. Every prayer counts. Every moment is a chance to grow.

As you turn the pages ahead, open your heart wide.

You are not just reading a book—you are stepping into a life God has prepared uniquely for you. A life where your past cannot imprison you, your weaknesses cannot disqualify you, and your future is held securely in the hands of the One who loves you without end.

Welcome to the journey.

Welcome to a new beginning.

Welcome to a life transformed by God Himself.

—Pastor Jonathan Reyes

First Steps

'Testimonies of Grace'

The stories and testimonies you are about to read may come from different voices and different journeys, but they all reveal the same miracle: God's grace moving through everyday lives. My prayer is that you will discover encouragement in their honesty, hope in their struggles, and joy in every victory they share.

Young Faith: The Beginning of the Journey

A New Heart in Manila — Rosa, 19, Philippines

"I grew up in a religious home, but I never felt close to God… That night, I gave Him my heart. I now wake each morning knowing I am deeply loved."

Reflection: God welcomes even the youngest hearts with His full measure of grace.

A Child's Simple Faith — Isabella, 10, Brazil

"I prayed on my own and asked Jesus to forgive me and stay in my heart forever… I love reading Bible stories now, because they make me feel close to Him."

Reflection: Faith does not depend on age—Jesus delights in childlike trust.

Deliverance and Freedom

From the Streets to the Savior — Marcus, 32, USA

"My life was drugs, hustling, and broken relationships… I knelt on the sidewalk and prayed for forgiveness. Today, I'm clean, and I lead a men's recovery group."

Reflection: No one is beyond the reach of God's saving hand.

A Mother's Prayer Answered — Caroline, 36, Kenya

"I prayed for my children, but I never thought about my own soul… That morning I gave my life to Christ. Now my children and I pray together each day."

Reflection: God redeems families when one heart says yes to Him.

*** Even as chains break, storms may come. Yet many testify that God's peace proves stronger than life's fiercest battles.**

Finding Peace in the Storm

Grace in the Ashes — Anna, 47, Ukraine

Chapter 1

Salvation

'The Beginning of Your New Life'

Every journey has a beginning. For some, it starts quietly, like a seed planted in the soil that no one notices until it breaks through the ground. For others, it begins in a sudden flash of light—an undeniable moment where everything changes. But no matter how it happens, salvation is the beginning of your new life, the first step in a lifelong walk with God.

This book has already shown you through testimonies that God meets people in all kinds of places: on a crowded street corner, in a quiet bedroom, in the ashes of loss, or in the laughter of a child. Some began their faith as teenagers, others as parents, soldiers, students, or business leaders. And yet, the miracle is the same—when you invite Jesus Christ into your life, you are not just making a decision; you are being born again.

I still remember my own beginning. I was just fourteen years old when I read a simple gospel tract. At the back was a prayer of salvation, and I meant every word I prayed. People laughed and mocked me for it, but I never looked back. That was more than fifty years ago, and the fire that was lit in my heart then burns even brighter today. Why? Because salvation is not a one-time experience you tuck away in the past—it is the start of a new life that keeps unfolding every day.

The subtitle of this chapter says it best: *"The Beginning of Your New Life."* Salvation is not the end of the story, it is the start of one. Think of it like birth. When a baby is born, the family celebrates—but no one expects the baby to stay the same size or never learn to walk. Birth is only the beginning. Growth, change, and maturity are what follow. In the same way, your salvation moment—whether recent or long ago—was the day your spirit came alive. Now the rest of your life is about learning how to live that new life, step by step, with God.

The Foreword reminded us that too many people stop at the decision and never learn how to walk. The Introduction reminded us that salvation is the door, but discipleship is the journey. The testimonies showed us that grace comes to people of every age, in every situation, across every culture. And my own story shows you that even a teenager, uncertain and unpolished, can be transformed by the power of God.

Chapter 3

Prayer

'Your Daily Conversation with God'

Every lasting relationship is built on communication. Whether it's a marriage, a friendship, or the bond between parent and child—without conversation, the relationship slowly fades. The same is true in your walk with God. Prayer is not a religious obligation; it's the heartbeat of your relationship with Him. It's how you talk to the One who saved you, the One who loves you, and the One who knows you best.

When you were saved, a door opened—a personal, living connection with the Creator of heaven and earth. Through prayer, that connection becomes communion. You're not just speaking into the air; you're talking to your Father. And He listens—not as a distant king burdened by petitions, but as a loving Father who delights to hear the voice of His child.

The subtitle of this chapter says it perfectly: *"Your Daily Conversation with God."* Prayer isn't a performance to impress others or a formula to unlock blessings; it's a dialogue that strengthens your faith, shapes your character, and helps you walk boldly with Christ. It's daily—because your spirit needs it as much as your body needs food. It's conversational—because it's not one-sided. You speak, and God responds—through His Word, through His Spirit, and through the quiet moments of stillness when your heart finally pauses long enough to listen.

Have you ever thought about how remarkable prayer really is? The same God who flung the stars into space, who commands oceans and angels alike, invites you into His presence—anytime, anywhere. You don't need a title, a robe, or a pulpit. You just need a willing heart. You can talk to God in your living room, in traffic, on a hospital bed, or during a morning walk. Heaven's line is never busy, and God never puts you on hold.

The disciples once asked Jesus, *"Lord, teach us to pray."* They didn't ask Him to teach them to preach, lead, or perform miracles—they asked to learn how to talk to the Father the way He did. They saw that His strength flowed from that connection. Every miracle, every word of compassion, every step He took was anchored in prayer. Jesus showed us that prayer is not just a spiritual discipline—it's a lifeline.

When you pray, you are not trying to change God's mind; you are aligning your heart with His will. Prayer is where transformation happens. It's where your worries are exchanged for

Chapter 5

Church Attendance

'Why Fellowship Matters'

It's early Sunday morning. Sunlight filters through the curtains, and for a moment the world feels still. You reach for your Bible on the nightstand, noticing how peaceful the room seems when you take even a moment to acknowledge God. Yet somewhere in the distance, the enemy whispers, "You can worship right here. You don't need to go to church today."

It's a familiar tug-of-war—between convenience and commitment, solitude and community, comfort and calling. But this moment, quiet as it seems, carries eternal weight. Because the decision to gather with other Believers is never a small one; it shapes your faith, strengthens your walk, and connects you to the very heartbeat of the Body of Christ.

When the writer of Hebrews urged, *"Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together,"* it wasn't a rule born of religion—it was an invitation birthed from relationship. God never intended faith to be lived in isolation. The Christian walk is not a solo journey; it's a shared pilgrimage. The church, with all its imperfections and personalities, remains God's chosen vessel for shaping character, nurturing spiritual growth, and demonstrating love in tangible ways.

Fellowship matters because it places us where transformation happens. Within the walls of the sanctuary—or under a tent, beneath a tree, or in a rented hall—we find people just like us: imperfect, forgiven, and learning. We sing the same hymns, lift the same prayers, and hear the same Word that cuts deep but heals deeper. In worship together, our voices blend into something holy—proof that when two or three gather in His name, He is there in the midst of them.

Church attendance is not about logging hours on a pew; it's about stepping into divine appointment. Each service, Bible study, or small-group meeting is an opportunity to see what God will do through collective faith. Someone needs your smile. Someone needs your handshake. Someone needs to see that if God brought you through your storm, He can bring them through theirs.

The enemy knows the strength of united Believers, which is why he works tirelessly to isolate them. A lone ember cools quickly when separated from the fire—but within the fellowship, it burns hotter, brighter, and longer. Fellowship rekindles the flame when life's winds threaten to snuff it out.

Chapter 7

Sin

'Overcoming Temptation and Living Free'

Every Believer eventually comes to a crossroads where spiritual reality can no longer be blurred by good intentions or selective memory. It is that moment when the excitement of salvation gives way to the daily grind of sanctification—where the thrill of new life in Christ meets the sobering truth that sin still whispers at the door. You are saved, yes. Redeemed, yes. But you still live in a world drenched in temptation and surrounded by voices that call you back to what Christ already delivered you from.

Part III of this journey—Fellowship and Community—opens right where the battle for the soul continues: in the human heart. This is where victory or defeat begins. If you want to live an overcoming life, you must come to terms with the reality of sin and the promise of freedom. The two are inseparable. You cannot understand grace until you recognize what it has saved you from, and you cannot appreciate victory until you've walked through the valleys where temptation sought to claim you.

Romans 8:1–2 declares a truth so radical that the mind can barely grasp it:

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death."

Freedom from sin and death! Not freedom from struggle, but freedom from condemnation. Not immunity from temptation, but power to overcome it. That is the difference between living under guilt and living under grace.

The enemy's greatest weapon is not always temptation—it is accusation. He reminds you of who you were so you'll forget who you are. But the Cross settled that argument forever. The moment you placed your faith in Christ, your old record was nailed to His Cross, and your new life was sealed by His Spirit. You are no longer under the law of sin and death; you are now governed by the law of the Spirit of life. That law is grace. That law is love. That law is freedom.

Still, walking in that freedom is a daily decision. It begins with surrender—not striving. Many Believers exhaust themselves trying to be "good enough" for God, forgetting that holiness is not achieved but received. When you wake up each morning and whisper, "Lord, I need You," that is not weakness—it's wisdom. The Holy Spirit does not merely accompany you through

Chapter 9

Sharing the Gospel

'Becoming a Witness for Christ'

There is a sacred beauty in sharing the gospel—the simple, powerful act of one life telling another where to find hope. It's not just about preaching from pulpits or quoting verses; it's about living the message of Christ in such a way that others see Him reflected through us. The gospel, at its core, is good news—but good news must be both told and shown. Words alone may inform, but when those words are joined with love in action, they transform.

Effectively sharing the gospel involves both what we say and how we live. The two are not rivals—they are partners in the divine conversation God is having with the world through His people. Our words declare the message of salvation, and our deeds prove its reality. When Believers show kindness, serve faithfully, forgive freely, and love unconditionally, they display the heart of Jesus. Yet, if those same Believers never speak about the source of their hope, others may see goodness but miss the gospel.

Jesus Himself modeled this balance perfectly. He fed the hungry—but also declared, *"I am the Bread of Life."* He healed the sick—but also said, *"Your sins are forgiven."* He touched the broken—but always pointed them to His Father in heaven. His love was not silent, and His words were not empty. Together, His message and His mercy revealed the heart of God.

As followers of Christ, we are called to do the same—to live the gospel and to speak it. To become a witness for Christ means more than reciting Scripture or handing out tracts; it means embodying the message we proclaim. A witness is someone who has seen something and cannot keep silent about it. You and I are witnesses of grace—recipients of mercy, carriers of truth, and ambassadors of reconciliation.

Imagine for a moment that you've discovered the cure for a deadly disease. Would you keep it to yourself, or would you tell everyone you could? The gospel is that cure—it heals the soul's deepest sickness, the separation between humanity and God. Sharing it is not a burden; it's an act of compassion.

But sharing the gospel isn't always easy. It takes courage to speak truth in a world that prefers comfort. It requires humility to love people who may not love us back. And it demands consistency—because our lives often speak louder than our words. The unbelieving world

Chapter 11

Tithes & Offerings

'Learning God's Economy of Generosity'

When we reach this final chapter, we step into one of the most misunderstood and, at times, misrepresented aspects of the Christian walk—giving. To some, the words tithes and offerings sound like obligations, rules, or church traditions. But in reality, they are reflections of the heart—windows through which God can see our trust, our gratitude, and our understanding of His provision. God never needs our money; He desires our obedience. And obedience, in its purest form, is born from love.

From the very beginning, the principle of giving was not tied to law, but to relationship. Before Moses received the Ten Commandments, before there was a temple, before Israel became a nation—Abraham, the father of faith, met Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High God, and offered him a tenth of all he had (Genesis 14:18–20). Abraham wasn't following a written rule; he was responding from his heart. He recognized that all he possessed came from God, and his tithe was a natural act of worship and gratitude.

That's the foundation of God's economy—it's not about how much we give, but why we give. God's economy is built on generosity, not greed; on gratitude, not guilt. It is not a system of exchange where we pay God for blessings, but a covenant of trust that acknowledges Him as the true source of every good thing. The tithe is a declaration that says, "Lord, You are my provider. I may work with my hands, but You are the One who gives the increase."

As Believers, we often operate within two economies: the world's and God's. The world's economy says, hold on to as much as you can; secure yourself first, and maybe give if there's anything left. God's economy says, give first; trust Me with the rest. The world's system revolves around scarcity, but God's system flows from abundance. In the kingdom of God, generosity never depletes—it multiplies. Every seed sown in faith grows into something greater than itself.

When we learn God's economy of generosity, we begin to see money differently. It stops being a master and becomes a tool. We stop giving to get and start giving because we've already received. The Believer who walks boldly with Christ understands that giving is not about

Final Encouragement: Walking On With Christ

'Growing Deeper, Living Bolder, Finishing Strong'

by James Langston, husband, father, grandfather, senior pastor, Missionary, and retired Navy veteran

When you first gave your heart to Jesus Christ, something eternal began. In that moment, your name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life, your sins were forgiven, and the Holy Spirit took up residence within you. But that moment—beautiful as it was—was not the end. It was the beginning.

Salvation is the doorway; discipleship is the journey. This final encouragement is written to help you keep walking—when the road gets steep, when life gets noisy, and when the world tries to pull you back to where you came from. The journey of faith is not a single step; it's a series of steps taken every day with Jesus by your side.

Growing Deeper

The Christian life is not about perfection—it's about progress. Growth in Christ is not measured by how many verses we know, but by how closely we walk with Him. Spiritual maturity happens in the hidden places: in quiet prayer, in daily obedience, in listening for His voice before making decisions, and in trusting His hand when we can't trace His plan.

To grow deeper is to allow the roots of your faith to reach far below the surface—where storms cannot shake you and seasons cannot dry you out. It means spending time in God's Word not out of duty, but out of hunger. It means prayer is no longer a ritual but a relationship.

There will be moments when you feel distant from God or uncertain about the next step. Don't let those moments define your journey—let them deepen it. Every root grows stronger underground before it ever bears fruit above. Keep watering your soul with the Word. Keep speaking with your Father. Keep walking with your Savior.

Growth takes time. But remember this: what God starts, He finishes. And He never plants something He doesn't intend to grow.

Living Bolder

Applying What You've Learned

'Reflection Questions from Chapters 1–11'

Before you continue your journey, take a moment to pause and reflect. Growth in Christ comes through prayerful consideration, honest self-examination, and the intentional practice of truth. These questions, gathered from each chapter, are designed to help you revisit what God has spoken to your heart and apply it in your daily walk with Him.

** Chapter 1 — Salvation*

God's First Step Toward You

1. What does salvation mean to you personally?
2. How has your understanding of grace changed since you came to Christ?

Your Notes:

_____

_____

_____

** Chapter 2 — Baptism With the Holy Spirit*

Filled, Empowered, and Commissioned

1. What role does the Holy Spirit play in strengthening your daily walk with God?
2. How can you invite the Spirit to lead you today?

Your Notes:

_____

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_____

** Chapter 3 — Prayer*

Your Daily Conversation with God

1. What does your current prayer life reveal about your trust in God?
2. What is one step you can take to deepen your prayer life this week?

Your Notes:

_____

_____

Next Steps Resources

'Tools to Keep Growing in Christ'

Growing in Christ is a lifelong journey. Salvation is the beginning, but spiritual maturity unfolds step by step, choice by choice, and day by day. These resources are provided to help you continue walking with God beyond this book—strengthened by His Word, grounded in His truth, and guided by His Spirit.

Use these tools prayerfully. Use them consistently. And remember: God delights in every step you take toward Him.

Daily Spiritual Growth Tools

1. A Simple Devotional Rhythm

Begin each day with God—even if only for a few minutes.

- **Read** a portion of Scripture.
- **Reflect** on what it reveals about God.
- **Respond** through prayer.
- **Rest** in His presence before stepping into the day.

Consistency builds strength. Start small, but start faithfully.

2. A Daily Prayer Pattern

Use this simple framework to guide your time with the Lord:

- **Praise:** Thank God for who He is.
- **Petition:** Bring your needs before Him.
- **People:** Pray for others.
- **Purpose:** Ask for wisdom to walk in His will today.

Prayer is not a ritual—it is relationship.

3. Choosing a Bible Translation

Select a translation that is both accurate and readable:

- King James Version (KJV)
- New King James Version (NKJV)
- English Standard Version (ESV)
- New American Standard Bible (NASB 1995 & NASB 2020)

A Final Prayer of Commitment

'A Personal Dedication to Continue the Journey'

Father, in the name of Jesus, I come before You with a heart full of gratitude for every truth You have revealed, every lesson You have taught, and every step You have guided throughout this journey.

Today, I choose to walk with You—not just in moments of strength, but in moments of weakness; not only in seasons of clarity, but in seasons of confusion; not only when the way is easy, but when the road is steep.

Lord, deepen my hunger for Your presence. Strengthen my commitment to Your Word. Teach me to pray with passion, listen with humility, and obey with joy. Help me to grow deeper, live bolder, and finish strong.

I surrender my past, my present, and my future to You. I offer my time, my gifts, my relationships, and my resources as instruments of Your glory.

When I fall, lift me. When I doubt, steady me. When I grow weary, renew me. When I am tempted, deliver me. When I am unsure, lead me by Your Spirit.

Lord Jesus, walk with me every step of the way. Shape my character, transform my thoughts, and align my desires with Yours. May my life reflect Your love, reveal Your truth, and honor Your name.

I dedicate myself to the journey ahead—a journey marked by faith, fueled by grace, and finished in victory through You.

Thank You for saving me. Thank You for guiding me. Thank You for walking with me.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

About the Author

'A Life Shaped by Grace and Service'

James Langston is a man shaped by grace, strengthened by faith, and burdened with a deep love for people. A retired U.S. Navy veteran, husband of many years, father, grandfather, pastor, missionary, and author of more than thirty Christian books, James has devoted his life to one calling: helping people find their footing, their faith, and their future in Jesus Christ.

For decades, James, alongside his wife Cecilia, has served through *Pilgrim Outreach Ministries International*, touching lives across continents — from Europe to Asia to the United States. Their ministry has fed families, strengthened marriages, supported widows and orphans, encouraged the brokenhearted, and pointed countless souls back to the One who heals, restores, and saves.

Yet beyond the accomplishments, publications, and ministry milestones, James holds one conviction closest to his heart:

Every person matters. Every story matters. Every soul matters. And God is not finished with you.

James writes with genuine compassion because he knows what it means to struggle. He understands what it means to pray through tears, stand when you feel weak, and trust God when you can't see the road ahead. His books are born out of lived experience, quiet prayers, midnight battles, and hard-won victories.

He writes not from a platform, but from a heart that has been held, shaped, and carried by God. To every reader—whether new in Christ or seasoned in the faith—James wants this message to ring loudly and clearly: You are seen. You are loved. You are valued. And God's plan for your life is far greater than anything you've imagined.

His prayer is that this book has helped you take your first steps, or your renewed steps, in walking with God. And his deepest desire is that you continue *growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ* (2 Peter 3:18), becoming stronger, wiser, and more confident in your faith each day.

James believes in you. He prays for you. And he rejoices over every step you take toward Christ.